

The Reptilian Fauna of the Islands between Dongara and Lancelin, Western Australia: Additional Notes.—The following list of reptiles summarises additional observations made on these islands between 1962 and 1964 inclusive (J. Ford, *W. Aust. Nat.*, 8, 1963: 135).

#### DISTRIBUTION OF REPTILES

##### *Egernia pulchra* Werner

Occurs on Escape Island, Jurien Bay, where two specimens were collected from under sheets of cardboard. It appears to be less numerous than *Egernia kingii* (Gray) on this island in the vicinity of shearwater (*Puffinus*) burrows probably because of the latter's competitive superiority in this particular habitat, the narrow crevices between rocks in the centre of the island and the dense ground litter under the low scrub vegetation constituting its chief niches on Escape Island.

##### *Rhodona lineopunctulatum* (Dumèril and Bibron)

During visits to Escape Island numerous wriggle tracks on the sand of dunes and at petrel burrow entrances were noted which may belong to this species. The skink has been collected on nearby Whitlock and Boullanger Islands, and identical tracks are common in the coastal dunes at Jurien Bay.

##### *Ablepharus lineocellatus* Dumèril and Bibron

Fairly common in dense litter under low bushes on Whitlock and Escape Islands, Scaree on Whittell Island: an individual was seen on the main plateau.

The Sandy Knoll Islands were visited on March 7, 1964, but despite an intensive search, no lizards were found. Reptiles are probably absent from the south island because of its small size and the high rate of seabird guano deposition on the plateau. *Ablepharus lineocellatus* and/or a gecko may possibly occur on the north island on which numerous deep rock crevices under the *Nitraria schoberi* scrub would provide adequate protection.

#### ZOOGEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS

Two reptile-species occurring on the islands between Dongara and Lancelin appear to be absent from the adjacent mainland and not to re-occur until an appreciable distance further south, *viz.* *Egernia pulchra* and *Ctenotus labillardieri* (Gray). The 180 miles between *E. pulchra longicauda* on the Jurien Bay islands and the nominate population in the lower South-West has already been discussed (J. Ford, *W. Aust. Nat.*, 9, 1963: 25), and it is believed that this is a real gap because extensive collecting in the Darling Range east of Perth has failed to reveal its presence north of Nanga Brook, the known northern limit in the South-West. On the mainland near Jurien Bay, the laterite breakaways in the vicinity of Mt. Lesueur, where a slightly higher rainfall falls than on the surrounding country, appear to be the most promising places to investigate despite a search of the locality by Dr. G. M. Storr and myself on March 27, 1964, which only revealed *Egernia nitida* (Gray) in these laterite crevices. (*E. nitida* was also found in dead

hollow blackboys, *Xanthorrhoea*, in sandplain country about 5 miles south of the Cockleshell Gully homestead.)

The Lancelin Island population of *Ctenotus labillardieri* (= *Sphenomorphus labillardieri*, Sec G. M. Storr, *W. Aust. Nat.*, 9, 1964: 84) is morphologically distinct from the closest mainland populations in the vicinity of Perth (Zoology Dept., University of W.A.) and near Mundaring Weir in the Darling Range which constitute the known mainland limits but further collecting is necessary in the intervening area before any definite conclusions can be drawn (cf. J. Ford, *The Emu*, 62, 1962: 61).

The skink *Egernia bos* Storr is now known to occur on the mainland opposite the Jurien Bay islands which it inhabits. On March 27, 1964, Dr. G. M. Storr and I collected several specimens similar to Sandland Island material from shallow burrows along a motor-vehicle track in low heath sandplain on the north side of Mt. Lesueur.

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**The Skink *Egernia pulchra* in the Stirling Range.**— In my review of the distribution and variation of the skinks *Egernia pulchra* Werner and *E. bos* Storr (*W.A. Nat.*, 9, 1963: 25), I was unable to cite any specimens of the former species from the Stirling Range although there were several of the latter from the area. During a visit to the Stirling Range on November 6, 1963, four specimens of *E. pulchra* were collected on the mountain slopes of Toolbrunup and Bluff Knoll where the species was found to be exceptionally abundant, there being numerous burrows, sometimes extending to a considerable depth, under and between the slate rocks.

Particulars of the four specimens (W.A. Museum nos. R21801, R21802, R21804 and R22861) are as follows: tail/head plus body ratio; 1.60-1.71; number of mid-body scales, 36 and 38; upper labials, 7 and 8, mostly 7; ear lobules, 3 and 4, mostly 3; and sub-digital lamellae on the fourth toe of the hind limb, 25-29. According to these data, the specimens conform with the typical measurements and meristics of the mainland nominate race. However, three specimens (R21802, R21804 and R22861) differ strikingly in dorsal colouration, and the first two are of broader and heavier proportions as illustrated in the photograph. There are no dorsal black streaks as in the typical form but instead a broad reddish-brown flush six scales wide extending down the back from the nuchals. The black markings on the sides are considerably reduced and are completely absent on the tail. On the labials, there is a slight orange suffusion but no specimen has an orange ventral surface as in the race *longicauda* from the Jurien Bay islands. The ear lobules and eyelids are a bright golden yellow and the head is olive-brown. The remaining specimen (R21801) is in an intermediate colour stage between that described above and the normal colour pattern, the black streaks being slightly reduced only near the nuchals, and it has a reddish-brown flush down the centre of the back. A specimen (R16788) with partially reduced dorsal black streaks, collected at Two